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COMMITTEE FOR PROGRAMME AND COORDINATION
Thirty-third session
6-22 October 1993 (Part II)
Agenda item 6

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE SECOND PART OF ITS THIRTY-THIRD SESSION

Draft report

Addendum

Rapporteur: Mr. Wolfgang STÖCKL (Germany)

II. PROGRAMME QUESTIONS

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995

Part one

1. The proposed programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995 was introduced by the Secretary-General to the Committee at its 14th meeting, on 7 October 1993.

2. At its 14th to __ meetings, on 7 to __ October, the Committee considered Part I of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995.

Discussion

3. A number of delegations considered that part one provided a good overview of the Secretary-General's proposed programme budget.

4. Several delegations welcomed the highlighting in the budget priorities such as human rights, humanitarian affairs and administrative management of peace-keeping and redistribution of resources towards those priorities.

5. A number of delegations felt that there was no balance among the treatment of priorities, and in particular that the priorities of the medium-term plan and issues relating to development had not received adequate attention. Many

stressed that there was a need to balance the interests of all Member States in the programme budget under consideration. A number of delegations felt that the Secretary-General had acted in accordance with paragraph 10 of resolution 47/213 which had established a balance between the priorities proposed in the outline and those in the medium-term plan.

6. A number of delegations were concerned over the rate of real growth of 1 per cent. The fact that the outline had been exceeded gave rise to concern by a number of delegations. They stressed the need for the budgetary process contained in General Assembly resolution 47/213 to be adhered to strictly.

7. Several delegations considered that restructuring in the economic and social fields should not constitute an end in itself, but should assist the Organization in implementing substantive programmes in those fields.

8. A number of other delegations also expressed concern that the redeployment of staff and resources among the various sections and programmes of the programme budget could distort the priorities established by the General Assembly in resolution 45/253 of 21 December 1990 and could introduce a degree of selectivity in the implementation of programmes approved by the intergovernmental bodies. Other delegations felt that the distribution of resources reflected the current priorities of the Organization well.

9. One representative welcomed the establishment of the Office of Inspection and Investigation, but stressed the need for a distinction between maintaining the balance between external and internal control.

Conclusions and recommendations

1. General considerations

10. The Committee recalled the budgetary process established by the General Assembly in its resolution 41/213 of 19 December 1986 in the timing of the submission of the budget proposal. The Committee stressed that, notwithstanding the delays, the proposed programme budget for 1994-1995 would be properly reviewed and approved before the end of the current session of the General Assembly in December 1993.

11. The Committee noted that no steps had been taken to reduce the overall number of General Service staff, despite significant expenditures on modern technologies.

12. The Committee recommended that, in order to ensure full delivery of the programmes in the economic and social sectors, a detailed review should be undertaken by the Secretariat to avoid duplication of work among the three new departments in those sectors and between them and other organizations of the United Nations system, in particular the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and the United Nations Development Programme. The recommendation for approval by the General Assembly of the programme narrative of those departments and UNCTAD was subject to that provision.

13. The Committee recommended that approval of all sectors involved in the decentralization process be subject to the decisions that the General Assembly would take on the matter.

14. The Committee noted that there appeared to be limited progress in modernizing and streamlining the working methods of the Office of Conference Services. It considered that there was no programmatic justification for the increase in the resources for the Department of Administration and Management and that that proposed increase should be allocated in accordance with the priorities of resolution 47/213 to the areas proposed in the medium-term plan and the budget outline.

15. The Committee noted that its approval of the narratives was without prejudice to the decisions to be taken by the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session with regard to (a) high-level posts (para. 80 of A/48/6 (Part I)); and (b) the peace-keeping support account.

2. Overall resource requirements

16. The Committee noted that the total amount of resources requested by the Secretary-General was above the level determined in the outline.

17. The Committee noted the proposed increase of 1 per cent real growth, and recommended that the overall budget for 1994-1995 be in line with the parameters established in resolution 47/213.

3. Priorities

18. The Committee decided that the priorities of a broad sectoral nature approved in the medium-term plan as well as in resolution 47/213 should be observed, and concluded that the budget should reflect the priorities at the subprogramme level as indicated in the plan.

19. The Committee questioned the usefulness of designating high or low priorities at the level of output or activity, representing 10 per cent of the resources, and recommended that that be discontinued.

4. Methodology

20. The Committee took note of the new methodology used to prepare the proposed programme budget, and recommended that it be further refined.

5. Format

21. The Committee noted with appreciation the new format of the programme budget that permitted in part one a summary of all the budget proposals. The Committee expressed dissatisfaction with the format of the sections. It also noted that extrabudgetary resources should be better presented and recommended that, in future programme budgets, the links between extrabudgetary resources

and regular budget resources be shown more clearly. The formulation of the objectives as distinct from activities should be improved.

6. Documentation

22. The Committee regretted that the problem of timely submission of documentation had again not been settled, and stressed that the schedule of issuance of documentation to review groups as set out in the relevant regulations and rules must be strictly adhered to.